

Tonto Basin Community Meeting 4-4-17

Meeting Start: 5:00pm

Meeting End: 6:30pm

21 residents attended

County: Supervisor Tim Humphrey, Sherry Grice, Sheriff Adam Shepherd, and Sgt. Virgil Dodd

Gila County:

- Supervisor Humphrey gives introductions and welcomes Guest Speaker, Joanne Conlin, Director of the Payson Senior Center.
- Joanne gives an overview of their program and the different services that they offer to senior citizens. She distributes flyers and pamphlets. She says that their “Meals on Wheels” driver, Cheryl, drives this way every Monday and their driver, Mary, comes one time a month. She adds that they also have a thrift store that all proceeds go to their senior services and there is also an upcoming High Tea Fundraiser on June 11th that will benefit them as well.
- A resident asks if the roads are closed, how do the meals on wheels people get to their clients? According to Ms. Conlin, they “...give it to the Kiwanis and they get it across, either by one of their 4-wheel trucks or the big military vehicle. Then we've arranged for an individual to meet on the other side & deliver...” To her knowledge, she says they've never missed a week in delivering across the creek.

Sheriff's Office:

- Sgt. Virgil Dodd reminds everyone that this is “Tax Fraud Season” and for residents be aware of fraudulent phone calls, emails, mail, etc., that ask for your banking information or credit card information. Do not do it, it's a scam. Please call (928) 425-4499 and report if you experience fraud such as this.
- Resident, Alana Wamhoff, asks if they ever patrols the area of Escondido Road, which is across the creek? He says they do but not as often as they would like to because of short staffing. He says he will make it a point to go to her neighborhood and patrol. Nearby residents complain about a particular quad rider who disturbs the peace all hours of the night. Sgt. Dodd asks for more information before he can look into it. Residents give him that information after the meeting.
- Another resident asks about people who are licensed to sell marijuana. Sheriff Shepherd says these people can only grow for their own use. The only time they can sell is if there is no dispensary nearby and even then there are restrictions on how much they can grow, sell, and possess. If they exceed those numbers it is unlawful. Sheriff advises residents to call and report any unusual or questionable activity regarding this issue.

Forest Service:

- Kelly talks briefly about the possible re-introduction of the YCC (Youth Corp) Program and

the Forest Service. District 3 County Supervisor, Woody Cline, will be holding an upcoming meeting in Star Valley on April 24th regarding the YCC Program.

- Kelly reminds residents about the importance of making their properties Firewise. He distributes How To flyers. He also informs residents that the FS does demonstration projects every year to show residents what they can and cannot do as far as making their properties Firewise. If your property abuts Forest Service, you are permitted to trim the weeds 30' from your structure(s) to FS property.
- Residents ask if they are allowed to collect cut up wood they find in the creek? Kelly responds yes, all they need to do is go to the FS Visitors Center and get a permit to do so. The permit is Free. When you go to get your permit, the FS will specify which areas you are permitted to take wood from.

Tonto National Monument:

- Duane Hubbard tells residents that the recent Heritage Days at the monument was very successful.
- A "Winging It" event is coming up soon, on April 13th for those individuals who are interested in birding. They have over 1000 recorded species of birds at the monument.
- They will be having a Junior Ranger Day on April 15th and a Mini Ranger Storytime on that day for youth.
- For individuals who are interested in an Internship at the monument they have what they call the Pathways program, you can go to www.pathways.gov for more information.
- On Earth Day, April 22nd, admission into the monument will be Free.

Open Discussion:

- A resident expresses his frustration with the "road approaches" at both sides of the creek are terrible and need attention. Mr. Humphrey assures the residents that as soon as the water levels begin to settle the County will go out and blade the approaches.
- Another resident claims the road is moving east at Bar X. He says our County graders are doing the work and are causing the flow to move east.
- Residents ask about the County leaving the "Road Closed" signs up too long? Supervisor Humphrey responds that the liability to the County is far greater if we didn't have the signs posted when the creek is flowing. The creek can be shallow in one area but four foot deep in another. We will look into other options though.
- There is discussion about allowing the County to do work in the creek. Supervisor Humphrey talks about the Army Corp of Engineers and the difficulty in trying to get them to allow us to work in the creeks, so as to protect people's properties from washing away and to repair existing dikes. Residents ask if he would invite an ACOE rep to a future Tonto Basin meeting? He will look into.
- Supervisor Humphrey informs residents that he has an upcoming meetings scheduled with Congressman Tom O'Halleran and Congressman Paul Gosar. He will express to them the need to build the Tonto Creek Bridge.
- ADOT is working on trimming weeds and brush overgrowth along SR 188 just outside of Tonto Basin. A resident asks if there are plans to come back and do the Tonto Basin area?

We will look into.

- Another resident expresses his disappointment in the County and their lack of motivation in trying to get the Tonto Creek Bridge built. They ask about the status of the TIGER grant for this year and if there are any other grants we should be applying for? They ask if we can invite Dave Leisko to one of our future meetings? We will check with Mr.Sanders.
- Supervisor Humphrey says last month there was a resident who expressed concern about the Oak Creek Bridge “washing away” in one spot. He goes on to say that ADOT inspects our bridges every 2 years. The rip-rap at Oak Creek Bridge goes underground at least 24(?) feet so there is no chance of it washing away.

Next meeting: May 2, 2017